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# THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN®

GUEST-STARRING FROM SYNCH™ GENERATION X®

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# METAMORPHOSIS!

DEFALCO KAYANAN LAROSA

HERE'S A MONSTER LURKING WITHIN THE SEWERS OF MANHATTAN.
A GROTESQUE, MISSHAPEN, SHAMBLING CREATURE OF NIGHTMARE!
THIS ISN'T A DREAM --
-- OR AN IMAGINARY STORY FOR THE FRIGHTENING OF YOUNG CHILDREN!
VERY REAL!
IT'S REAL!
TRUST ME...
BECAUSE I KNOW!
THE AMAZING Stan Lee presents: SPIDER-MAN
I, MONSTER!
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I SUPPOSE I SHOULD START AT THE BEGINNING...
HE'S BEEN AT IT ALL DAY, HASN'T HE?
THAT'S MY PETER! HE'S DILIGENT, RESPONSIBLE, AND --
-- ABSOLUTELY TERRIFIED!
TOMORROW'S EXAM IS VERY IMPORTANT TO HIS GRADE POINT AVERAGE, AND HE'S DETERMINED TO ACE IT!
HOW DOES HE DO IT, MARY JANE?
HE JUGGLES GRADUATE STUDIES WITH HIS FREELANCE PHOTOGRAPHY WORK AND HIS MARRIAGE TO YOU -- AND STILL MAKES IT ALL LOOK SO EASY!
CLEAN LIVING IS THE ANSWER, AUNT ANNA. ⇒YAWN⇐ THAT AND AN INCURABLE CASE OF INSOMNIA!
I...I'M SORRY, PETER. I DIDN'T REALIZE WE WERE TALKING LOUD ENOUGH TO DISTURB YOU.
DON'T GIVE IT A SECOND THOUGHT! EVERYTHING'S COOL!
I KNOW THIS MATERIAL!
AND I'M READY FOR A BREAK, ANYWAY!
VANCED IOLOGY
I THINK I'LL...Uhhh...DROP BY THE DAILY BUGLE, AND SEE IF THEY HAVE A QUICK ASSIGNMENT FOR ME.
DO YOU REALLY THINK THAT'S WISE, HONEY?
MAYBE YOU SHOULD TURN IN EARLY, AND GET A GOOD NIGHT'S SLEEP FOR A CHANGE.
NAH! I'M TOO WIRED TO HIT THE SHEETS. A LITTLE EXERCISE WILL HELP RELAX ME.
BESIDES, I WON'T BE GONE ALL THAT LONG.
FAMOUS LAST WORDS --!
I COULDN'T REALLY BLAME MARY JANE FOR DOUBTING ME.
Y'SEE, SHE KNOWS EXACTLY WHERE I GO AND WHAT I DO WHENEVER I SLIP OUT OF THE HOUSE AT NIGHT.
I'LL GIVE YOU A QUICK HINT --

-- IT INVOLVES A WHOLE LOT OF **WEBBING!**

THIS IS EXACTLY WHAT I NEED AFTER BEING BURIED UNDER A PILE OF BOOKS ALL DAY!

SEEMS LIKE A QUIET NIGHT. **NO PROBLEM!** IF I CAN'T FIND ANY CRIMES TO SNAP --

-- I'LL JUST EASE OUT THE KINKS WITH A FEW DOZEN TRIPLE **SOMERSAULTS.**

AND, EVEN AS I LIMBERED UP IN MY OWN UNIQUE MANNER, NOT FAR AWAY --

YO, MAN!

YOU WITH THE NASTY **PICARD** LOOK!

GOT A **LIGHT** FOR A POOR BROTHER?

SORRY, MISTER...

I DON'T SMOKE.

DO YOU **BLEED?**

EMPTY YOUR *POCKETS*, AND SAVE US ALL THE TROUBLE OF *FINDING OUT!*

TSK TSK IS THIS ANY WAY TO TREAT A *VISITOR* TO OUR FAIR CITY?

DON'T YOU REALIZE THAT THE MAYOR COUNTS ON THE TOURIST TRADE TO HELP BALANCE HIS BUDGET?

SPIDER-MAN!

IT'S THOUGHTLESS AND UNSOCIABLE ACTIONS LIKE YOURS WHICH TARNISH THE SHEEN ON THE OL' *BIG APPLE.*

IT'S A GOOD THING I HAPPENED BY IN TIME TO PREVENT YOU FROM ADVERSELY AFFECTING OUR UPCOMING *CRIME STATS.*

I REALLY SHOULD GIVE YOU GENTLEMEN A MAJOR *TONGUE-LASHING* --

-- BUT I THINK YOU'VE ALREADY GOTTEN THE *GIST* OF MY MESSAGE!

HOW'S ABOUT *YOU,* BUDDY?

YOU *OKAY?!*

Y-YEAH... *Uhhh*...I'M *FINE!*

YOU REALLY OUGHT TO WATCH WHERE YOU WALK AT NIGHT.

A LONELY PARK ISN'T THE SAFEST PLACE FOR A *KID* LIKE YOU!

*Uhhh*...THANKS FOR THE HELP...AND THE ADVICE!

I'LL BE MORE CAREFUL IN THE FUTURE!

SEE THAT YOU ARE!

THE SUPER HERO UNION ONLY REQUIRES ME TO DELIVER ONE *LAST MINUTE RESCUE* PER CUSTOMER!

A KID LIKE ME?!

I WONDER WHAT THE WEB-SWINGER WOULD SAY IF HE KNEW THE ***TRUTH?***

I MAY LOOK LIKE AN AVERAGE TEENAGER, BUT I'M ACTUALLY A ***MUTANT*** AND A MEMBER OF ***GENERATION X!***

STILL, I'M REAL GLAD ***SPIDEY*** POPPED UP WHEN HE DID!

MY MUTANT POWER ALLOWS ME TO GET ***"IN SYNCH,"*** AND TEMPORARILY TAKE ON THE ABILITIES OF OTHER NEARBY MUTANTS --

-- BUT IT WOULDN'T HAVE BEEN VERY EFFECTIVE AGAINST THOSE GANG MEMBERS!

***Ahhhh...*** MY PETS HAVE FINALLY BEGUN TO PULSE!

THEY'VE ***FOUND*** MY CHOSEN PREY, AND ARE ALREADY ***TRANSMITTING*** HIS LOCATION!

MAKE READY, MY SWEETS! THE TIME HAS COME FOR ME TO FINALLY GET MY REVENGE ON *GENERATION X* --

-- STARTING WITH THE ONE CALLED *SYNCH!*

ONE BY ONE THEY WILL FALL, EACH WITH INCREASING TERROR, UNTIL ALL HAVE BEEN DESTROYED --

-- BY THE PERILOUS POWER OF THE *PLANTMAN!*

LOSING TO THOSE ANNOYING KIDS THE FIRST TIME WE FOUGHT WAS BAD ENOUGH --

-- BUT THEIR LACK OF ***RESPECT*** WAS EVEN MORE IRRITATING!

THEY MOCKED BOTH MY ***COSTUME*** AND MY ***POWERS!***

I MEAN, ***REALLY*** -- *THEY COWER AT THE MERE MENTION OF MAGNETO* -- THE ***MASTER OF MAGNETISM!*** AND WHAT HAS THAT CRETIN ACCOMPLISHED WITH HIS MUTANT SUPREMACY SILLINESS?

PERHAPS ***PLANTS*** JUST AREN'T CONSIDERED *"COOL ENOUGH"* -- IN THE COLLOQUIAL PARLANCE.

YOU AND YOUR SISTERS, MY LOVE, WILL SOON TEACH THEM THE ***ERROR*** OF THEIR WAYS! MAGNETISM -- MUTANTS -- ***BAH!*** THE DECIDUOUS... THE CONIFEROUS. THERE IS WHERE ***TRUE*** POWER LIES!

SEE **GENERATION X#25**
– Gene' Ralf.

THROUGH THE VAST BACKGROUND ***ROOT SYSTEM*** WHICH SPREADS BENEATH THE CITY OF MANHATTAN --

"-- I HAVE ALREADY DISPATCHED ONE OF YOUR SISTERS TO THE SURFACE!

"SHE WILL ENCOUNTER THE UNSUSPECTING ***SYNCH*** --

"-- AND BLOW HIM A ***KISS!***

"IF ALL GOES ACCORDING TO PLAN, *AND THERE'S NO REASON IT SHOULDN'T*, THE ***RESULTS*** OF HER SPECIAL ***MUTAGENIC POLLEN*** WILL BE AS INSTANTANEOUS --

"-- AS THEY ARE ***DRAMATIC!***"

***AARRRGH!***

"MAYBE YOU SHOULD TURN IN EARLY!"

EVEN AS I SWING TOWARD HOME, I PICTURE MARY JANE'S SURPRISE WHEN I ACTUALLY TAKE HER ADVICE...

...THAT'S WHEN, AS IF ON CUE, I FIRST HEAR THEM --

-- THE DISTANT **CRIES IN THE NIGHT!**

WITHOUT HESITATION, I QUICKLY DO MY SWING THING --

GRRAL!

-- AND IMMEDIATELY WISH I'D STAYED HOME WITH MY BOOKS!

**YO, UGLY!** I REALIZE THE MONSTER UNION REQUIRES THE OCCASIONAL RAMPAGE --

-- BUT IT'S JUST **SOOOOO** BEEN THERE, DONE THAT!

YOU REALLY WANT TO ATTRACT ATTENTION?

FORGET THIS WHOLE MINDLESS DESTRUCTION GIG, AND GO ON THE ***TALK SHOW CIRCUIT!***

HARRGH!!

ON SECOND THOUGHT, WITH YOUR SWEET AND GENTLE DEMEANOR, YOU COULD ALWAYS CONSIDER A CAREER WITH THE ***IRS!***

HAVING NO IDEA WHAT THE HECK'S GOING ON, I TRY TO **DISTRACT** THE CREATURE --

-- AND DRAW HIS ATTENTION **AWAY** FROM THE PANICKED CIVILIANS!

ARRK!
IS THAT A *PRESENT* FOR ME?
I SINCERELY APPRECIATE THE THOUGHT, BUT I HAVE A FIRM POLICY AGAINST ACCEPTING *GIFTS* OR *GRATUITIES* FROM MY FOES!
BESIDES, IT'S NOT *SAFE* TO PARK ON THE STREET --
-- AND I CAN'T AFFORD TO *GARAGE* THE DARN THING!
dogs!

GRAAK!
*OOPS!* SEE WHAT I MEAN ABOUT STREET PARKING?
FEEL FREE TO GO CALL YOUR *INSURANCE COMPANY!*
THERE'S NO NEED TO HURRY BACK ON MY ACCOUNT!

*WAIT!* I JUST REMEMBERED --!
YOU CAN'T LEAVE THE SCENE OF AN ACCIDENT UNTIL YOU WRITE A NOTE TO THE OWNER --
-- AND STICK IT INTO WHATEVER REMAINS OF HIS WINDSHIELD!
ARRR
RRG!

*RELAX!* THERE'S NO NEED TO PANIC! I'M SURE YOU'LL COME TO AN EQUITABLE SETTLEMENT!
IF YOU'RE SHORT ON CASH, TRY PULLING A *SEINFELD* --
-- AND VOLUNTEER TO BE HIS *BUTLER!*
Hhmmm...
NOT QUITE WHAT I HAD IN MIND!

WHERE DID THIS THING COME FROM?

WHAT DOES HE WANT?

AND WHY IS HE DRESSED LIKE A MEMBER OF GENERATION X?!

IF I COULD ONLY GET AN ANSWER TO ONE OF THOSE QUESTIONS --!

BUT HE EITHER CAN'T OR WON'T SPEAK!

IF NOT FOR HIS EYES, I'D PROBABLY JUST CROSS HIM OFF AS A MINDLESS BEAST!

BUT THOSE EYES --

-- SO FULL OF FEAR AND PAIN!

IT'S LIKE THEY'RE PLEADING WITH ME TO -- Uh-oh!

SOMETHING'S SUDDENLY BURSTING FROM THE GROUND --!

LOOKS LIKE THE TENDRILS OF SOME GIANT PLANT!

WHATEVER THE HECK IT IS, LAUGHING BOY DOESN'T SEEM TO BE REAL THRILLED BY IT!

WHAT THE --?!

I-IT JUST YANKED HIM BENEATH THE SURFACE!

THOSE BRANCHES -- IT'S GOTTA BE MY IMAGINATION, BUT THEY SEEM TO BE BECKONING ME, ALMOST TAUNTING ME TO FOLLOW!

I STAND ON THE PRECIPICE, STARING INTO THE DARK AND ANGRY MAW...

...IT'S OBVIOUSLY A **TRAP!**

ONLY A COMPLETE FOOL WOULD LEAP INTO THE UNKNOWN...

...IN A MISGUIDED ATTEMPT TO SAVE ONE MONSTER FROM ANOTHER!

I SHOULD JUST WALK AWAY.

YEAH...

...BUT HIS **EYES** --

-- SO FULL OF **FEAR** AND **PAIN!**

MARY JANE, PLEASE FORGIVE ME...

...I CAN'T ABANDON THOSE EYES!

**WHOA!** I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT TO EXPECT WHEN I LEAPT INTO THE LOOKING GLASS, BUT IT CERTAINLY WASN'T **THIS** --!

THE TUNNEL'S BRIMMING WITH STRANGE AND EXOTIC BLOOMS!

THEY'RE ALL SO **BEAUTIFUL**, AND -- IF MY SPIDER-SENSE IS ANY JUDGE -- ALSO QUITE **DANGEROUS!**

WATCH YOUR TENDRILS, PAL!

I'M A HAPPILY MARRIED MAN!

THEY SUDDENLY SNAKE TOWARDS ME, WHIPPING THROUGH THE AIR WITH LETHAL INTENT.

WITH MY SPIDER-SENSE TO GUIDE ME, I RELY ON MY SPEED AND REFLEXES TO RUN THIS LIVING GAUNTLET --

-- BUT I'M NEVER AT MY BEST IN A CONFINED SPACE --

-- AND I QUICKLY RUN OUT OF ROOM TO MANEUVER!

FOR EVERY VINE I SNAP --

-- A DOZEN MORE LASH AROUND ME!

IT'S LIKE TRYING TO SWIM AGAINST A SEA OF CARNIVOROUS SERPENTS!

THEY'RE EVERYWHERE -- BITING, SNAPPING, CLAWING!

EVERYWHERE!

I GUESS THAT'S WHY I SUDDENLY PANIC, FLAILING LIKE A DROWNING MAN WHO'S GOING DOWN FOR THE LAST TIME!

AT THE VERY HEIGHT OF MY FRENZY, MY SPIDER-SENSE UNEXPECTEDLY GOES BALLISTIC --

-- RIVETING MY ATTENTION ON A SPECIFIC GROUP OF FLOWERS!

INSTINCTIVELY, I REALIZE THAT THESE PLANTS ARE FAR MORE MENACING THAN ALL THE REST!

BUT WHY?!

WHY?!

THE ANSWER, WHEN IT FIRST COMES, SEEMS AS SWEET AS A BABY'S SMILE --!

PSSTT

BUT THEN --!

AAARRGGHHH!

THERE'S A NEW **MONSTER** LURKING WITHIN THE SEWERS OF MANHATTAN.

A GROTESQUE, MISSHAPEN, SHAMBLING **CREATURE OF NIGHTMARE!**

I WISH THIS WAS A **DREAM** --

-- OR AN **IMAGINARY STORY!**

BUT IT'S **REAL!**

Oh, GOD...

...IT IS SO VERY REAL!

IT REALLY IS A PLEASURE TO SEE YOU, ***SYNCH*** M'BOY --

-- ESPECIALLY IN YOUR CURRENT STATE!

W-WHAT DO YOU ***WANT?***

ULTIMATELY, I'D LIKE TO EXTEND MY ***RULE*** TO THE ENTIRE WORLD!

FOR NOW, I'M IN A BIT OF A QUANDARY -- ***TORN BETWEEN KILLING YOU, AND RETURNING YOU TO GENERATION X!***

JUST IMAGINE HOW DELICIOUS IT WOULD BE TO TORTURE YOUR TEAMMATES WITH THE SORRY ***FATE*** WHICH AWAITS THEM ALL --!

ON THE OTHER HAND, THERE ARE DISTINCT ADVANTAGES TO THE ***ELEMENT OF SURPRISE!***

***T-TRUE!***

S-SPEAKING OF YOUR OPTIONS, I HAVE A WACKY IDEA! W-WHY DON'T YOU JUST RELEASE HIM WITH THE ANTIDOTE?

T-THAT'S ASSUMING THERE *IS* AN ANTIDOTE!

***OF COURSE!***

I HAD TO BE PREPARED IN CASE OF ACCIDENTAL EXPOSURE TO THE ***MUTAGENIC POLLEN!***

***SAFETY FIRST -- THAT'S MY MOTTO!***

UNFORTUNATELY -- FOR YOU TWO -- I'M NOT REAL BIG ON ***SHARING!***

P-PITY!

I STRUGGLE TO KEEP MY VOICE CALM AND CASUAL, STRAINING TO APPEAR FAR MORE CONFIDENT THAN I AM.

MY LEFT EYE -- **EYES** -- FEEL LIKE THEY'RE BEING PUNCTURED BY A THOUSAND SEARING DAGGERS!

THE TALONS WHICH HAVE REPLACED MY HANDS BURN WITH UNMENTIONABLE AGONY!

AND MODESTY PREVENTS ME FROM DESCRIBING THE OTHER GROSS AND HUMILIATING CHANGES WHICH ARE, THANKFULLY, HIDDEN BY MY COSTME!

NEXT TIME I'LL HEED MARY JANE'S ADVICE!

IF THERE IS A NEXT TIME!

I ADVISE YOU TO KEEP YOUR DISTANCE, **SPIDER-Uhhh**

NEED A NEW **WORD** THERE, DON'T YOU?

AS I WAS SAYING, YOU'D BETTER ***STAY BACK***...OR I'LL BE FORCED TO INTRODUCE YOU TO MY HUMBLE ***BODYGUARDS!***

GROWN FROM THE ROOTS OF THE STURDY ***BANYAN*** TREE, THEY POSSESS ENOUGH RAW POWER TO PUT A REAL ***RUIN*** ON YOUR DAY!

*I MUSTN'T **PANIC!***

*MUSTN'T SURRENDER TO **DESPAIR!***

*NO MATTER HOW OVERWHELMING THE ODDS, I'VE GOT TO KEEP **FIGHTING!***

*IT'S MY ONLY HOPE OF FINDING THE **ANTIDOTE!***

*Uh-Oh! I THOUGHT I COULD CAPTURE THE BEASTY BOYS WITHIN A WALL OF WEBBING --*

*-- BUT THEY'RE TEARING RIGHT THROUGH IT!*

*IF ONLY I COULD CIRCLE BEHIND THEM, AND GET MY HA -- **TALONS** -- ON THE PLANTMAN!*

I HOPE YOU DON'T INTEND TO PROLONG THIS INDEFINITELY!

I'M A BUSY MAN -- *WITH PLANTS TO WATER, YOU KNOW, AND MANY OTHER HEROES TO MUTATE* -- SIMPLY SUCCUMB NOW!

*THERE'S GOT TO BE A WAY TO GET PAST THESE CREATURES --*

*-- BUT THEY KEEP POSITIONING THEMSELVES BETWEEN ME AND THEIR -- **HEY!***

*LOOKS LIKE CHATTY CHARLIE SHATTERED HIS HAND WHEN HE ACCIDENTALLY PUNCHED THAT CONCRETE BEAM!*

*Hhmmm...*

THE PLANTMAN MAY HAVE MIS-CALCULATED THE TENSILE STRENGTH OF THESE CHARACTERS, MAKING THEM TOO **HARD!** TOO **BRITTLE!**

INSTEAD OF TRYING TO AVOID THEM --

-- I SHOULD JUST CONFRONT 'EM HEAD-ON!

***NICE MOVE!***

NICE, BUT -- REGRETTABLY -- ***INEFFECTIVE!***

SINCE THEY LACK EVEN A RUDIMENTARY NERVOUS SYSTEM, MY PETS CAN NEITHER FEEL NOR REACT TO ***PAIN!*** FAR ***SUPERIOR IN COMBAT*** TO THE ANIMAL LIFE WHICH THEY MAY SOON TRAMPLE UNDERFOOT.

THEY'LL JUST KEEP ***FIGHTING*** AND ***FIGHTING*** NO MATTER HOW MUCH DAMAGE YOU INFLICT ON THEM! WHAT A FORMIDABLE ARMY THEY WOULD MAKE!

THE PLANTMAN SEEMS TO HAVE FORGOTTEN ABOUT ME FOR THE MOMENT!

I...I FEEL SO ASHAMED!

WITH ALL MY TRAINING...

...I SHOULD HAVE BEEN ABLE TO HANDLE MY TRANSFORMATION... BUT I... I TOTALLY LOST IT!

THAT'S OVER NOW! I'M THROUGH PLAYING THE HELPLESS PATSY!

I'VE GOT TO THINK, GOTTA FIND A WAY OUT OF THIS MESS!

IF ONLY I COULD BE MORE LIKE ***SPIDER-MAN*** --!

THE GUY'S SO COOL AND PROFESSIONAL!

HE ACTS LIKE HE ISN'T EVEN FAZED BY -- ***HEY!*** ***THAT'S IT!***

GOT TO RELY ON MY SPIDER-SENSE TO DIRECT ME THROUGH THE FLURRY OF FISTS!

MUST KEEP MOVING, AND STAY FOCUSED ON THIS FIGHT!

CAN'T ALLOW MY MIND TO STRAY...

...TO WEIGH ME DOWN WITH IMAGES OF WHAT MY LIFE WILL BE LIKE IF I REMAIN STUCK IN THIS FORM!

HOW CAN I EVER FACE MARY JANE?

WHAT WILL I -- NO! NO! THOUGHTS LIKE THAT ONLY LEAD TO DESPAIR! AND THAT'S NOT A WORD I WANT IN MY BOOK!

INTERESTING STRATEGY! BY CONSTANTLY RICOCHETING BETWEEN MY TWO PETS...

YOU'RE SLOWLY WHITTLING THEM DOWN PIECE BY PIECE!

Y-YOU SURE YOU WANT THE HASSLE OF BEING A SUPER VILLAIN?

G-GUY WITH YOUR TALENTS COULD MAKE A FORTUNE IN THE TOOTHPICK TRADE!

MY THANKS FOR THE CAREER ADVICE, ARACHNID --

-- BUT I REALLY HAD MY HEART SET ON WORLD DOMINATION!

IMAGINE MAN'S CITIES UTTERLY OVERGROWN BY VINES -- WEEDS -- FLOWERS OF HALLUCINOGENIC HUE BURSTING THROUGH THE MACADAM OF MADISON AVENUE!

RIVERS OF CHLOROPHYLL CASCADING OVER -- Ahh -- LOOKS LIKE IT'S TIME TO COME UP WITH ANOTHER DEATH TRAP --!

WHAT SHOULD IT BE?

DIDN'T PACK ANY EXTRA BAYON ROOTS SO MORE SIMULACRA ARE OUT!

AND THE OLD MAN-EATING PLANT BIT IS TOO CORNY EVEN FOR SOMEONE CALLING HIMSELF PLANTMAN!

W-WHATEVER YOU'RE GOING TO DECIDE, IT'D BETTER TO *FAST* --

-- 'CAUSE YOU'RE NOW FACING *TWO SPIDER-GUYS!*

W-WHETHER IT'S THANKS TO OUR CURRENT EXPOSURE TO YOUR MUTAGENIC POLLEN OR NOT, I SOMEHOW MANAGED TO GET GENETICALLY *"IN SYNCH" WITH* ***SPIDER-MAN*** --

--A-AND I NOW POSSESS ***POWERS*** SIMILAR TO HIS!

S-SORRY FOR THE WAY I ACTED EARLIER!

N-NO PROBLEM, PAL! E-EASY TO UNDERSTAND WHY YOU WERE SO FREAKED OUT!

B-BESIDES, LIFE WOULD BE *SOOO BORRRING* WITHOUT AN OCCASIONAL GRATUITOUS FIGHT BETWEEN HEROES!

GENTLEMEN, ***PLEASE!*** MUST I REMIND YOU THAT WE'RE IN THE MIDDLE OF A BATTLE HERE?

PLEASE DIRECT YOUR ATTENTION TO THE ***PLANT*** ON YOUR IMMEDIATE LEFT --

-- THE ONE WHICH EVEN NOW HAS BEGUN TO SPRAY THE AREA WITH ***VENOM-COVERED THORNS!***

W-WHAT'S THAT WEIRD TINGLING SENSATION IN MY HEAD?

I-IT'S AN INSTINCTIVE RESPONSE TO DANGER!

P-PUT YOUR REFLEXES ON AUTOPILOT, AND ALLOW IT TO DIRECT YOU THROUGH THE BARRAGE!

Y-YOU'RE ***KIDDING,*** RIGHT?

J-JUST BE PREPARED TO SIGN A ***CONFIDENTIALITY CONTRACT*** WHEN THIS IS OVER!

I-IT WORKED!

I...I MADE IT PAST THE THORNS... A-AND AM NOW CLOSING IN ON THE PLANT-MAN!

D-DON'T GET TOO COCKY, KID.

YOU SHOULD ALWAYS LISTEN TO THE VOICE OF EXPERIENCE, SYNCH!

YOUR FELLOW WEB-BEAST ASSUMES -- *AND RIGHTLY SO* -- THAT I WILL NOT GO GENTLY INTO THAT GOOD NIGHT!

AS A MATTER OF FACT, I HAVE THIS PARTICULAR LITTLE PLANT --

-- WHICH HAS A DISTINCT AVERSION TO ANY FORM OF DARKNESS!

FORGET ABOUT HIM, SPIDER-BEAST!

GOOD ADVICE IS WASTED ON THE YOUNG!

M-MAYBE THAT'S TRUE --

Y-YOUR *EYES,* SYNCH!

C-CLOSE YOUR *EYES!*

-- B-BUT I ALSO HAVE A SUGGESTION FOR YOU!

G-GIVE ME THE *ANTIDOTE!* *N-NOW!*

I KNOW YOU, SPIDER-MAN... YOU'RE NO *KILLER!*

SO DON'T EVEN *TRY* TO BLUFF ME!

O-OKAY!
I-I'LL SKIP THE *BLUFF* --
-- A-AND MERELY GIVE YOU A MORE ***PERSONAL*** REASON FOR PRODUCING THE ANTIDOTE! I'M TOSSING YOU INTO THE SEWER J-JUNCTION THAT CONTAINS YOUR ***MUTATOR PLANTS!***
A-ARE YOU *INSANE?!*
NO -- MY PRETTIES -- NOT YOUR VENOM! NOT AT ME! NOT AT --
PLEASE! FOR THE LOVE OF --
AAARRRGGHH!
*Ohhh*...THE VENOM... MUTATING ME... CHANGING ME... CAN'T...
...FEEL SO STRANGE, LIKE I'VE BECOME -- BECOME...
WHAT YOU SO ADMIRE-- A PLANT.
B-BY THE WAY, I LIKE THIS LOOK ON YOU -- *A-ADDS A CERTAIN* ***AUTHENTICITY*** *TO YOUR NAME!*
N-NOW, THEN, ABOUT THAT *ANTIDOTE --!*

AS EXPECTED, THE PLANTMAN REVEALS THE LOCATION OF HIS MIRACLE ANTITOXIN, AND -- WITHIN THE HOUR -- I FIND MYSELF WEBBING MY **MASK** BACK TOGETHER --

-- IN ORDER TO PRESERVE BOTH MY **MODESTY** AND MY **SECRET IDENTITY!**

THAT THE PLANTMAN'S DOSE?

YEAH, BUT I'M GOING TO MAKE HIM WAIT UNTIL I'VE REUNITED WITH THE REST OF **GENERATION X!**

PROBABLY WISE. WHAT A NUTCASE! A DANGEROUS ONE, THOUGH.

GIVE MY REGARDS TO **SKIN, CHAMBER** AND **HUSK!**

WILL DO!

ONE LAST THING...

...I OWE YOU FOR **BOTH** RESCUES!

DO YOU? I MIGHT NOT EVEN HAVE GOTTEN THE DROP ON THE PLANTMAN IF YOU HADN'T BURST FREE WHEN YOU DID!

TAKE CARE, MY FRIEND...

I'D LIKE TO SAY THIS WAS **FUN,** BUT...*Welllll*...WE BOTH KNOW **BETTER!**

END

Shadowcat